

No. 189 December 1992

Hillandale

NEWS





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HILLDALE NEWS



The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded 1919

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Front Cover illustration: "Changing The Needle" from The Voice of The Victor, February 1913

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since its formation, after the First World War, the Society's organisation and structure has remained simply its members working together. As a result of these efforts, we now have a worldwide organisation of nearly 800 members, an important bi-monthly journal, a vigorous publications policy and booklist, considerable cash assets and stock and equipment. Despite this success, I have been concerned for some time now that this seventy-odd year-old structure is no longer sufficient to protect these assets or to secure the Society's long-term future.

The Committee and one of our members, Stephen Gadd (who is a lawyer), have considered both the problem and the options open to us. We concluded that the most appropriate solution would be to form the Society into a company limited by guarantee. The effect of this would be to create a legal entity within which the Society would operate and which would protect all its tangible assets. I also understand that such a move would result in certain tax and other advantages. In addition, the Committee agreed to investigate the possibility of the Society becoming a registered charity. This move would bring other advantages to the Society and bring to its activities the not inconsiderable kudos of charitable status.

It is always sad to see the old informal ways passing, but it is equally clear that in the world of 1992 we have to protect our existing assets and also plan for the future. The veterans who returned from the war in 1918 could not have foreseen their small Society becoming the organisation it is today. It is our responsibility to ensure that what they created is protected for the future.

Although the AGM agreed to these important changes, I should be happy to hear from anyone who feels unhappy with these decisions.

Peter Martland

EDITOR'S NOTES

Henry and Olga Wood

Readers who enjoyed Jonathan Dobson's articles on Mr and Mrs Henry Wood in *Hillandale News* Nos 187 and 188 (August and October 1992) may be interested to know that Jonathan will be introducing a programme about the records he re-discovered, on BBC Radio 3 on Sunday December 27th 1992 at 6pm. He will be playing some of the records, so aficionados should tune in on that date to hear some of the unpublished recordings for themselves. *Hillandale News* was privileged to have been given the opportunity to publish the first full report of this major find and our thanks go to Jonathan for this.

The National Sound Archive

I am glad that Peter Adamson's letter "Museum of Sound Recording Artifacts?" in the October issue has drawn responses from readers and also a reply from the National Sound Archive in which their current policy on preserving such items has been clarified. This is an aspect which needed to be tidied up so that members who may wish to donate items to the NSA can be assured as to their ultimate resting place.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the **February** issue will be **15th December 1992.**

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.

Annual General Meeting 1992

This was held in London at the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church Rooms, 235, Shaftesbury Avenue, London at 2.30pm on Saturday 26th September. Peter Martland, the Chairman, welcomed all those attending the meeting. Apologies were received from Mike Field, Ken Loughland and Tony Besford. The minutes of the last AGM were accepted. Chris Hamilton, the Treasurer, presented the financial report for the previous year. The Society had a deficit of £1078 over the period. Chris made the point that, if the cost of the new computer and the sale of the old computer were taken out of the accounts, the Society would have had a surplus of around £266. A Girobank account had been opened to allow several members from abroad to pay their subscriptions without incurring any bank charges. Chris reported that the printing costs and postage cost of *Hillandale News* were due to rise in the next year and he was recommending a £1 increase in the subscription to £11 to cover this. The overseas rate would also rise by £1 to £12 and by US\$2 to US\$24. The report and new subscription rates were approved by the meeting. (A summary of the Society's balance sheets is printed on page 132.)

Peter Martland in his report stated that the Society had assets of around £25,000. The Committee had discovered that the Society had no legal status and as a result these assets were unprotected. This had caused the Committee to look into how best to protect these. With this in mind they had approached Stephen Gadd, one of our members who is a solicitor, to advise on what the best course of action would be to carry this out. His advice was to have the Society formed into a Company limited by guarantee. This would have the effect of identifying the ownership of the assets within the Society and would also protect the officers of the Society from any personal liability. Stephen had also mentioned that the Society might be able to apply for charitable status. A sub-committee had been formed to work with Stephen Gadd to investigate this and prepare the application for registration, if appropriate. Peter also proposed that a new post of Vice-Chairman be made to look after the London meetings. He also proposed to create another new post of Vice-Chairman, with responsibility for the regions. Chris Hamilton had agreed to step down from his post as a Vice-Chairman to make room for these changes. Peter thanked Geoff Edwards for organising the London Meetings and arranging the syllabus until June 1993.

A formal proposal to approve changing the Society's status to that of a Company limited by guarantee and to apply for registration as a charity was put to the meeting and this was approved.

The Editor of *Hillandale News*, reported that a steady flow of articles for publication had been built up but that he was short of articles on machines. Thanks to the new computer and desk top publishing program many improvements had been made to the appearance and quality of the magazine. He also thanked those members who had contributed articles to the journal.

The Election of Officers and Committee

Peter Martland was re-elected Chairman; Eddie Dunn and George Woolford were elected Vice-Chairmen, the former to be i/c the regions and the latter to be i/c the London meetings. Ken Loughland was re-elected a Vice-chairman. Chris Hamilton was re-elected Treasurer, Suzanne Lewis was re-elected Secretary and Frank Andrews, Geoff Edwards, George Glastris, Richard Taylor and Len Watts were re-elected to the Committee. Stephen Gadd was elected to the Committee. The President is George Frow and the Vice-Presidents are Tony Besford, Mike Field, Christopher Proudfoot and Dave Roberts. These latter five posts are appointments for life. Mrs Legge was re-elected Auditor.

After discussing points raised from the floor by John Grace and Gordon Bromly the meeting closed with George Frow giving a vote of thanks to Peter Martland.

The next AGM is to be held at the Walsall Phonofair on 24th October 1993.

Summary of C.L.P.G.S. Accounts for year ended 31/7/92

Bank accounts: No.1 = Bank of Scotland Main a/c No.6 = Midland No.2 a/c
 No.2 = Bank of Scotland Book a/c No.7 = Midland High Interest a/c
 No.3 = Bank of Scotland Premier a/c No.8 = Girobank a/c
 No.5 = Midland No.1 a/c

Account	8	7	6	5	3	2	1	Total
Start balance	8576.04	1906.49	1210.20					11692.73
PURCHASES								
Refund						14.00-		14.00-
H&D Printing				756.00-		342.34-	3450.84-	4553.18-
Book Printing			1125.00-			2425.00-		3550.00-
Book Purchases			735.34-			532.40-		1267.74-
Miscellaneous							160.54-	160.54-
CAPITAL								
EQUIPMENT								
Sound equip.							19.80-	19.80-
Computer							1073.24-	1073.24-
COMPUTERS								
Maintenance							461.00-	461.00-
Software						360.88-	379.10-	739.98-
MARKETING								
Miscellaneous							135.80-	135.80-
OVERHEADS								
Phonofair							341.54-	341.54-
Cirencester								
Exhibition ex.			71.50-	32.95-		128.16-	1207.52-	1440.13-
Travel						123.40-	98.04-	221.44-
Stationery		11.28-				5.49-	937.96-	954.73-
Postage			110.85-	303.18-		415.36-	1682.76-	2512.15-
Telephone						28.47-	90.14-	118.61-
Room Rent							220.00-	220.00-
Insurance				240.00-		50.00-		290.00-
INCOME								
H&D Sales							47.50	47.50
Equip. Sales							260.00	260.00
Donations							11.00	11.00
Interest		62.12			440.17	60.66	162.64	725.59
Phonofair '92							536.00	536.00
Miscellaneous						81.25	99.75	181.00
Subscriptions	130.00			141.00		40.00	6757.00	7068.00
Adverts	130.00					31.84	1226.08	1387.92
Booksales			869.38			5825.16	85.50	6780.04
TRANSFERS		8638.16-	721.90-	19.07-	5638.16	379.03	3361.94	0.00
End balance	260.00				6078.33	1852.64	2423.32	10614.29
Income	260.00	62.12	869.38	141.00	6078.33	6417.94	12547.41	26376.18
Outgoings		8636.16-	2775.87-	1351.20-		4565.30-	10124.09-	27454.62-
Cash flow	260.00	8576.04-	1906.49-	1210.20-	6078.33	1852.64	2423.32	1078.44-

The Society had a net outflow of £1078.44 in the year ended 31/7/92. This is accounted for by the purchase of our new computer for the production of *Hillandale News* and represents the approximate cost of printing and distributing one issue of *Hillandale News*.

Any member wishing a full set of the accounts should send SAE (A4 size) to: The Hon.Treasurer, [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Cupar, FIFE KY15 4EP, U.K.

A PROBLEMATIC PORTABLE

by Christopher Proudfoot

A correspondent has written to ask if I can identify a portable gramophone he has acquired, and which bears a remarkable resemblance to an HMV belonging to a friend. The carcasses of both machines are nearly identical, with only minor variations, and it is clear that the anonymous version started life at the HMV factory, since the motor-board has the fixing holes for an HMV motor: these are visible only from the underneath, as the leathercloth covering on the top is not pierced.

Sadly, the simple to the question is 'No'. Although the Gramophone Company never supplied current HMV components to other manufacturers (at least, as far as I know), I have come across other instances of redundant parts, particularly cases, being sold off. I once saw a Perophone cabinet which looked astonishingly similar to the Library Bijou Grand. That it was just that became clear when the motor-board was lifted and turned out to be a recycled Bijou Grand lid, complete with Nipper transfer (perforated by the hole for the turntable spindle!) The earlier type of

Gibson tone-arms used on Zonophones were disposed of through the trade when a modernised form appeared on the company's own machines, and horn gramophones of lesser make do sometimes turn up with

these Gibson arms, in their black cast-iron gimbals.

Let us take a look at the early HMV portables:

The first one, of 1920-1, had an oak case with doors in the front and a motor-in-the horn arrangement. It had no model number, there being no space left in the then-current numbering system, but it was given a code: PAO (P = Portable, A = first model of the series, and O = oak case).

The second model was similar, but slightly shallower. This was achieved by arranging for the

motor-board to pivot at the front so that, as the lid was closed, the rear end, carrying the tone-arm, descended into the case. The tone-arm was much shorter than on the POA, and was mounted centrally rather than in the back right corner. This was coded PBO, and appears in the 1922 catalogue.



Photograph (a)

The next version was mechanically identical, but had a black cloth-covered case; it was, therefore coded PBC. ('C' for cloth remained the code for black cloth in later years, when models like the 101 and 102 could be had in other colours.)

Finally, late in 1923, came Model 105. The new numbering system of that year allowed

The soundbox fitted was not on the machine when acquired, and all that is known about the original one is that it must have been of similar size, as the lid cannot be closed over anything larger.

If there ever was a clue as to the firm responsible for this recycled portable, it must have been on the soundbox. Possibly,



Photograph (b)



Photograph (c)

the portables a designation, and at or about the same time, there were some modifications of a cosmetic nature: all fittings, including the tone-arm, were finished in black, and the neat push-button lid-catch gave way to a cheap suitcase-type affair.

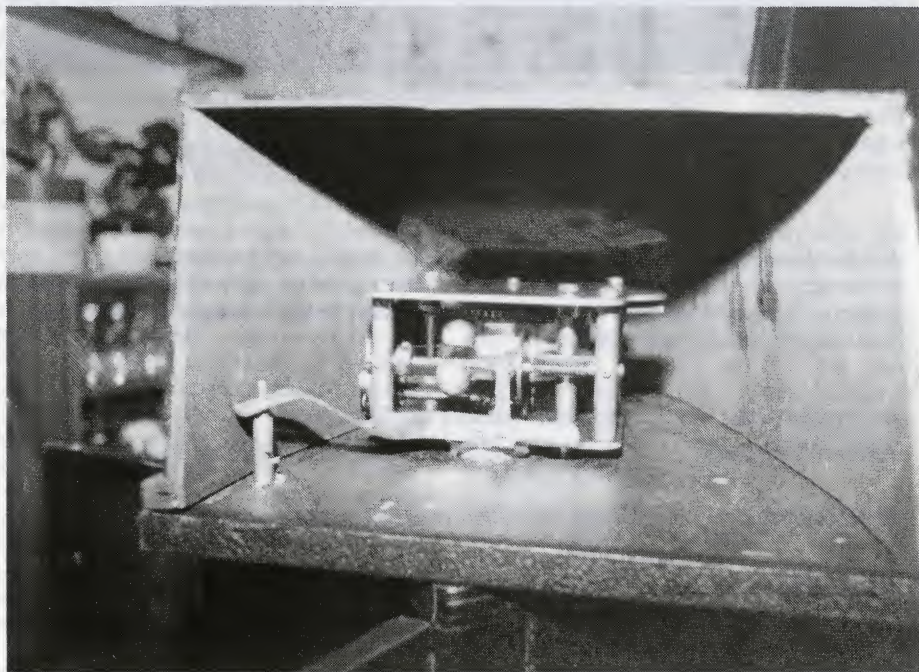
The minor differences between the 'anonymous' case and the HMV are thus accounted for: the latter is a PBC, and the former is part of the redundant stock of 105 cases left over after the introduction of the much more compact (but no longer-lived) 100 in 1924. It has the suitcase catch and the clips for the needle tins (the only HMV internal fittings retained) are black.

Lockwoods (Perophone) were again responsible. Certainly, they seem to have had connections with the Gramophone Company, for they produced a strange console cabinet model in which the horn projected upwards into the lid from the left-hand side (where most consoles have a record compartment). This design was patented by the Gramophone Company, and indeed forms part of the same patent as the 101 portable.

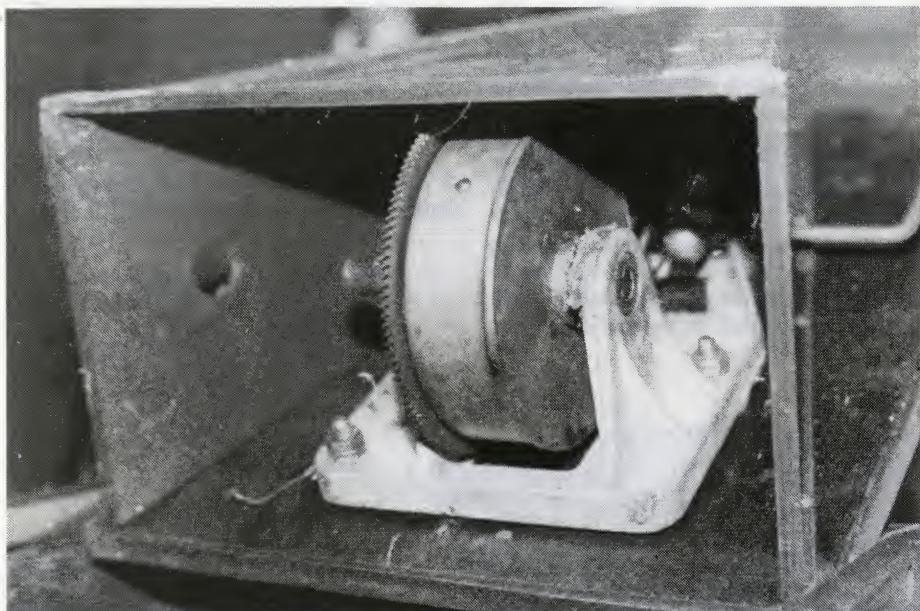
If any reader has a similar portable with a name, or an obvious original soundbox that might provide a clue, it would be interesting to hear from them.

Photographs:

- a) The anonymous conversion. The motor is clearly Garrard (actually a No.9), and the tone-arm has a flamingo trade-mark on it, indicating a Beka (Lindström) origin. The conventional position of the carrying handle is part of the conversion; in HMV form, these models had the carrying handle on the other side, perhaps to keep dust out of the winding hole when the machine was put away.
- b,c) The PBC (in need of some tender loving care), open and closed.
- d) The Garrard motor. The horn is of different shape, probably because the more rectangular profile of the motor would not have fitted the HMV horn. In any case, of course, the cases may have been supplied without the horn.
- e) The HMV motor. It is normal for small HMV models of the early 1920s, except that the chassis is cast in light alloy rather than iron, and there is no gearing on the winding arbor.



Photograph (d)



Photograph (e)

Forthcoming Meetings in London

London Meetings are held at the National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, South Kensington, on the third Thursday evening of the month promptly at **6.45pm** (unless stated otherwise). Members' attention is drawn to the London Meetings Notice on page 100 of issue 188 (October 1992).

December 17th	<i>Entirely for Pleasure</i> with Tom Little
January 21st 1993	Paul Tritton and Peter Copeland on <i>The Lost Voice of Queen Victoria</i>
February 18th	<i>Mr and Mrs Henry Wood Re-discovered</i> with Jonathan Dobson
March 18th	<i>The Gramophone Record as an Historic Document Part 4</i> with Chris Hamilton
April 15th	Rick Hardy and Len Watts on <i>Nobody will notice</i>
May 20th	<i>Feline groovy</i> with Peter Adamson

WHEN FATHER PUT HIS DAUGHTER ON THE STAGE

by John Davies

The Welsh soprano Amy Evans (1884-1983), made several recordings for the Pathé etched label hill-and-dale discs in 1906-07 which included numbers from Lionel Monckton's *Cingalee* and *Country Girl* and André Messager's *Véronique* with the baritone Francis Ludlow; a Handel aria; an excerpt from Gounod's *Faust* and an abridged version of Arthur Sullivan's *The Yeomen of the Guard*, with Bantock Pierpoint, Emily Foxcroft, Ben Ivor and Francis Ludlow.

Amy Evans began her long career in most brilliant style on the 18th July 1899, the day her father put his daughter on the stage as a competitor in the Soprano Solo Competition of the National Eisteddfod of Wales at Cardiff. Her mother was furious at Mr Evans for making such a spectacle of her daughter in front of all those people! "Never you mind, I know what I am doing" he said, which must have been the understatement of the Edwardian decade. The adjudicators at this prime Welsh event were Dr John Frederick Bridge, conductor of the Royal Choral Society and before that organist and master of the choristers at Westminster Abbey; Dr Joseph Parry, lecturer in music at the University College of South Wales and composer of hymns, anthems and amongst others, the opera *Blodwen*; Daniel Price, baritone, who was one of the first fifty scholars at the Royal College of Music when it opened in 1883; and the great tenor, Ben Davies, who had made his name

singing English opera in London. Amy Evans, fourteen years old and with her hair down to her waist, waited with seventy-seven other young hopefuls for her name to be called. The test piece was "Hear Ye, Israel" and Amy took the stage and sang the aria. The packed pavilion was stunned, and afterwards pandemonium broke loose. It took all of Ben Davies' voice and more to quell the furore before he could announce formally the judges unanimous decision that Amy Evans was the winner. He could not believe that one so young could sustain such a voice and told the audience that in his opinion Miss Evans was a great natural singer, "I may be a false prophet but, so far as I can foretell, she will, with proper training, become one of the greatest singers this country has produced".

There was quite a crowd waiting when the train arrived at Dinas Station and Amy was given a noisy welcome. A pony and trap was waiting to take her home to Tonypandy and the procession, headed by the town brass band, marched her all the way through Tre-alaw and up to Pandy Square, where she again sang her winning song and was carried to her parents' house shoulder high in a large arm-chair!

Amy Evans was born on the 24th October 1884 at Ynyshir in the Rhondda Valley. She was about five or six years old when her family moved to Tonypandy where her father was officially connected with the Naval Colliery Company at Penygraig. Her

mother was a well-known local musician and a member of the Cor Mawr Tonypandy. Young Amy gave her first public performance when she was seven, and typical of most Welsh youngsters she was always singing and competing somewhere on an eisteddfod platform. She had her first formal lessons in singing when she was ten from the baritone, Ivor Foster (also from Tonypandy, and a very popular concert singer and prolific recording artist) and from Davit Lloyd, organist and choirmaster at St. Andrew's Church at Llwynypia.

Following on her National Eisteddfod success, Ben Davies further advised Amy not to sing in public again for at least three years and allow her voice to mature and settle, and in the meantime finish her schooling and seriously apply herself to voice training. He said "She has everything in her favour, extraordinary musical feeling and a quality of voice that is truly rare. At this time I must impress upon you that if she sings in public now, it will be very detrimental to her career later on." Although her father was employed 'on the surface' at the Colliery, he was not well-off and the cost of sustaining Amy for a lengthy course of education away from home could not be met without assistance. Typical of the community spirit in the Valleys, a committee was formed to organise fund raising events for Amy's benefit and this, together with the close interest and patronage paid to her talent by Robert Forrest Esq., Steward to the Earl of Plymouth, who resided at Castell St. Fagan near Cardiff, Amy Evans' advancement was secured. She went to a school at Worcester Park in Surrey and was

there for three years without even singing a note. During this period she also studied in Germany learning the language, and in Paris studying French and music under a Madame Piccioti. In London she had voice tuition with Alberto Randegger and general studies with Mrs Randegger.



Amy Evans

Amy Evans' professional début was at the Cardiff Triennial Music Festival on 23rd September 1904. She was soloist in a performance of Schumann's *Scenen aus Goethes Faust*. This was followed with more concert engagements and 'at homes' in London and in Wales. On May 1st 1905 she was invited to sing before the Princesses Christiana and Victoria at Castell St. Fagan's which was very well received and reported in the Western Mail:

"The next contribution was *Y Deryn Pur*, by Miss Amy Evans, who had been specially requested to sing in Welsh.

Needless to say the song was beautifully rendered. Her Royal Highness was greatly pleased at the effort, and herself led a round of hearty applause. She next gave, with thrilling effect, *Bird in the Springtime*, composed by her teacher, Signor Randegger. In this Miss Evans displayed the highest cultivation of the upper register of her voice. The piece affords the voice ample opportunities, and Miss Evans repeatedly reached the top C, and on one occasion the top E. This was received with prolonged applause, and gave the greatest delight to all present."

In this year also she sang in concert with the Ebeneser Choir of Tonypandy in per-

formances of Haydn's *The Seasons*, Costa's *Eli*, and *Chaethgludiad* by Emlyn Evans, all conducted by W. T. David. Sir Edward Elgar came to stay for two days at Castell St. Fagan's in September 1907 and conducted a performance of *The Kingdom* for the Cardiff Triennial Music Festival, in which Amy Evans sang the soprano part. This concert was especially noted for the beautiful singing by the 280-strong chorus.

In 1909 Amy Evans made her operatic début with the Charles Workman Company at the Savoy Theatre in London in small parts and acting as understudy to Nancy McIntosh, the principal soprano in H.R.S. Gibbet's opera *Fallen Fairies*. Her chance came when Miss McIntosh left the cast in a hurry over a dispute with the management and Miss Evans took over at very short notice and with complete success. She then joined the George Edwards Company for a revival of Oscar Strauss' *A Waltz Dream* at Daly's Theatre in which she played the rôle of Princess Hélène. This production together with *The Merry Widow* and *The Dollar Princess*, were taken on tour in England and then to the U.S.A.

In the north-west of England the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union was well subscribed to, giving annual concerts under the stimulating baton of one of the best conductors of the time, Harry Evans, who was responsible for making Liverpool an important place on the musical map. Harry Evans composed a cantata called *Dafydd ap Gwilym*, which Amy Evans gave the first performance of in Liverpool in April 1910. In the following year was celebrated the Coronation of King George V, and the London Welsh took part with a special Concert at the Queen's Hall on 4th July 1911. This concert featured many of leading Welsh singers of the day, including Amy Evans, Winifred Lewis, Ivor Foster, Laura Evans-Williams, Gertrude Hughes, Dilys Jones, Powell Edwards, Ben Davies, Gwladys Roberts, John Roberts, Gwynne Davies and David Evans. In those

days London's Welsh-speaking population numbered in thousands and one of the favourite meeting places of the 'Cymmrodorian' was the Welsh Chapel in Charing Cross Road where Singing Festivals were regularly held. Amy Evans took part in these events, such as on March 7th 1912 with Dilys Jones, Gwynne Davies and Powell Edwards with Marie Novello at the piano.

Amy Evans sang for the first time at Covent Garden in 1910, at first in small parts and then in 1912, it was announced that Miss Amy Evans was to sing the rôle of Michaela in *Carmen* but she fell sick only hours before the curtain went up. This might have been her chance missed in grand opera, but she did sing there again in 1913 and 1914, and for five more seasons until 1923 after which she left for the USA. She met her husband, the Scottish baritone Fraser Gange, at a Queen's Hall Concert in 1917 and they were married not long afterwards. They went together on tour in the USA and the American life-style and opportunities made their impression on them both and in 1923 they decided to emigrate. Fraser Gange was not an opera singer but he was known to British concert-goers and soon after he arrived in America he made his début there at a recital in New York at which he sang one song by Richard Strauss in the presence of the composer. Fraser Gange also taught music at the Juilliard Foundation in New York and at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore. Mr and Mrs Gange lived in Baltimore and from that city they made tours all over the USA and in 1928 went on an extensive tour of Australia, New Zealand and the Colonies. Their first return trip to Britain was in 1929 when they gave concerts as soloists and as a duo. Amy sang as soloist with National Orchestra of Wales at concerts in Tonypandy on 27th and 28th January 1930, and with the baritone Idris Daniels at Salem Chapel, Porth, on 26th February 1930.

She also recorded for the Columbia company in London in January 1930, but nothing was released from this session. There also some Edison Blue Amberols from about 1912 on which she sang solos, duets and as the soprano member of a "National Welsh Mixed Quartet". Mr and Mrs Gange came home again to Wales in 1937 to appear as guest artistes at the National Eisteddfod, again in Cardiff, and Amy's eighty-four-year-old father was in the audience whilst her mother was at home listening to it all on the wireless. Fraser Gange made a lot of recordings in America and some were released in Britain on Columbia, and as a husband and wife duet they often took part in sponsored radio shows in the States. Amy also appeared at the Chicago and New York Metropolitan Opera Houses.

On 19th July 1960 a group of Welsh exiles arrived at Heathrow en-route for the National Eisteddfod which was once again being held in Cardiff. Two members of the party were Mr and Mrs Gange from Baltimore. Amy had been invited to take part in the traditional closing concert of the Eisteddfod, the 'Cymanfa Ganu' (a singing festival) on 7th August, and she was asked to sing her 1899 winning piece, *Hear Ye, Israel*. She wanted to sing in English as she had done sixty years earlier but was not allowed because of the strict Welsh-only rule adopted by the National Eisteddfod. Fraser died in Baltimore in 1963. Amy Evans continued to sing for special concerts and gave her last performance for the Association of Welsh Women's Clubs in America in 1975, when she was ninety-one years of age. She died at her home in Baltimore on 5th January 1983.

References:

- Girard and Barnes: *Vertical-cut Cylinders and Discs* (BIRS 1964)
 E. Wulstan Atkins: *The Elgar-Atkins Friendship* (David & Charles 1984)
Y Cerddor (1906)
 Covent Garden Prospectus (1910)
 W W Price Index, National Library of Wales
 EMI Music Archive

Reissues of recordings by AMY EVANS are as follows:

Two excerpts from *Yeomen of The Guard* are on Pearl GEMM 282-3, and various excerpts from *Cingalee*, *The Country Girl*, *Faust* and *Theodora* are on Adlonni Cassette AH 85

Addresses of suppliers:

Pavilion Records Ltd., Sparrows Green, Wadhurst, Kent TN5 6SJ, England
 Adlonni Recordings, Bryn Goleu, Plasgwyn, Gwynedd LL53 6UT, Wales

LETTERS



W. S. Burke

Dear Editor,

I wish to correct a mistake in the report, in *Hillandale News* No.187, August 1992, of my presentation on 18th June 1992. It states, in error, that W. S. Burke was the grandfather of Miss Sydney Fairbrother. What should have been said was that in the absence of a recording by her real grandfather Sam Cowell (the early Music Hall artist who died before the recording process was invented) one of songs performed by another singer was played. The song in question was *Villikins and his Dinah* sung by W. S. Burke on HMV P 6379.

I have had this record in my possession for some time and had often wondered about the identity of the performer. The record was made in Calcutta but Mr Burke was clearly very English and I thought perhaps that he was a British serviceman who amused the clientele of the 'messes' as a hobby. Fortunately on the night of my presentation Michael Kinnear, who is undoubtedly the world's greatest authority on Indian recordings was in the audience and, to my great delight, provided me with details of the singer and the recording.

Born Walter Stanley Burke in Hammersmith, London he went to India as a young man. He was obviously a man of many talents, so as well being a journalist, amongst other things he became a champion cyclist and rode internationally for India.

Although the recording I have made in 1925 he had already cut the same title around the turn of the century on a 7" G&T, which just happened to be the first ever recording made in India. My recording of *Villikins* has Burke singing alternately in English and 'Indian'. Michael Kinnear pointed out that each of the choruses sung in 'Indian' were actually all different Indian languages which showed how much respect he had for the culture of his new home. The other side of the record is an extremely funny impression of an Indian Lawyer entitled *The Barisal Pleader*. I am sure that had he so wanted Mr Burke could have made a very good living on 'the halls'.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Hardy, Watford, Herts.

Decimal Currency

Sir,

I have just seen two statements on page 45 of the June issue of *Hillandale News* which are completely inaccurate. In mentioning the price of Edison Bell cylinders 1/3d is quoted as 6.25pence and 1/- is quoted as 5 pence.

This is completely meaningless because a working man would have considered himself well paid at £2 (200 pence in modern money) upon which amount he could have kept a large family - in comfortable conditions. When the junior Houghs began the Electric cylinder company, I believe their salary as Directors was £4 per week, upon which they could have lived very comfortably and paid a servant.

Using modern money quotations in the magazine for prices of years ago is completely meaningless. It blinds us to how EXPENSIVE discs and cylinders were.

I shall now go through the article carefully erasing the modern moneys wherever they appear in order that any future reader of my copy will not be misinformed. Please refrain from paid in future!!!

Best wishes,

Ernie Bayly, Bournemouth, Dorset

J. H. Squire

Dear Chris,

I found George Frow's letter in the August issue of *Hillandale News* most interesting, but must correct one statement.

The Moss-Squire Celeste Orchestra (its correct name) had nothing to do with Edward Moss, but was a venture by Squire in association with the brothers Harold and Fred Moss, almost certainly not related to the founder (with Richard Thornton) of Moss Empire Theatres.

It is true, of course, that later, when the J. H. Squire Celeste Octet was formed, Squire did have a long and fruitful association with Moss Empires.

If anybody could tape for me the cylinders Squire made, I should indeed be grateful, and would gladly pay for the tape and postage incurred.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Cliffe, Hitchin, Herts

Mrs Henry Wood and Dame Nellie Melba

Dear Mr Hamilton,

The August *Hillandale News* was one of the best of recent times. I was particularly intrigued by Jonathan Dobson's account of, inter alia, the records by Mrs Henry Wood. Bauer lists only one, the 'Joan of Arc' aria, GC 3778. This has been issued on Symposium's Vol.VII of the Harold Wayne collection, CD 1093. Even Dr Wayne seemed unaware that Mrs Wood had made any other recordings, and Michael Henstock, who wrote the programme notes, does not allude to any other recordings. So the 'vocal collectors [who] know that what is printed above [six recordings] is the complete issued recordings by the Gramophone Company' are knowledgeable indeed! Perhaps Symposium and the RAM could come to some agreement to publish these six, and also the unpublished items, including the singing by Henry!

And now for something completely different. I have been browsing through early numbers of *Sounds Vintage*, and on p.70 of vol. 2, no.3, an article on early broadcasting states that when an Melba concert was broadcast on 15th June 1920, the "signals received at the Eiffel Tower were so good that gramophone records were cut". Electrical recording? Acoustic perhaps? What happened to the records?

Yours sincerely,

George Taylor, Harrogate, N.Yorks

Museum of Sound Recording Artifacts and the Voice of Queen Victoria

Dear Chris,

In the October 1992 issue of *Hillandale News* (page 110) Peter Adamson asked several times the question "where is our Museum of Sound recording Artifacts?", a question I, too, would like answered.

In the *Hillandale News* of June 1992 (page 50) Peter Copeland, Conservation Manager of the National Sound Archive, unequivocally confirmed that it was no part of his or the Archive's remit to preserve various carriers of sound with which the National Sound Archive deals. Further, only the sounds themselves were of concern to him and the NSA - a policy of no return if ever there was one. Such a concept ignores the information to be gleaned from

the visual inspection of the physical properties of the artifact itself. These characteristics - especially in the case of cylinders - can often be as revealing as the sounds themselves emanating from a sound carrier.

What truly puzzles me, though, is why if the NSA has, according Peter, no duty to preserve these sound carriers with which it has been entrusted, the NSA has a designated and resident Curator of Artifacts - our own distinguished Society member, Benet Bergonzi. Surely the artifacts are where their curator is - or should be.

Readers may be interested to know that the concern expressed about the NSA's realisation of a Graphophone cylinder, that may carry the voice of Queen Victoria, surfaced at the International Association of Sound Archives meeting in Canberra, Australia, in September of this year. Dr Michael Biel, a professor at the Department of Communications at Morehead State University, Kentucky in the USA, and a guru of the cylinder and disc recording scene, significantly gave a presentation with the title "Damn the Artifact ---Full Sound Ahead".

Sincerely,

Joe Pengelly, Mannamead, Plymouth.

Preservation of Sound

Dear Editor,

May I add a contribution to the correspondence concerning the work of the NSA?

It seems to me, from the comments so far, that the NSA is not in the business of 'preserving' sounds at all. Preservation means to retain the original. Whilst I accept the case that the focus of the NSA is on the Content and not the Carrier, I do not believe that the two can be considered as unrelated.

When the Sound remains in analogue form - be it groove or magnetic - it can at least claim to preserve its origins. Once it has been transformed into digital data its originality is destroyed and so, for many, has its interest. It is about as authentic as a magazine print of the Mona Lisa! That is not Preservation but Replication.

In fact, the NSA following such a course could not even hope to re-create the sound of the Sound. Electrical reproduction is influenced by the equipment used and the variations are significant. Thus, the playing of a CD track of, say Bill Haley on the latest State of the Art sound system could not be what the 1950's teenagers heard issuing forth from their portable Dansettes, which would be different again

from the sound experienced by their parents whose gramophone decks played through a valve radio.

The preserving of authentic sound must require its contemporary means of recreation. Acoustically recorded material played on acoustic equipment is the **ONLY** means of appreciating the soundwaves encountered by the earliest record enthusiasts, and that is what Preservation is about.

The stance apparently adopted by the NSA introduces a third philosophy into our hobby, the first being that it is a duty to protect the historic artifacts of recorded sound for their own sake, the second that we should preserve the authentic sound itself. Now this third view suggests that all we have to do is store a replica of the original. Well, you may take your choice but I cannot believe it is right to sacrifice original material to a format that requires dedicated hardware which is infamous for its tendency for instant obsolescence. Indeed, there is no evidence to suggest that even the software will outlive the original shellac. At least with the latter mechanical playing stays within reach.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Swindall, Kingsthorpe, Northampton

The National Sound Archive replies

Dear Sir,

I write in connection with Peter Adamson's letter (*Hillandale News* No.188) on the National Sound Archive's policies relating to the storage and conservation of its collection of 78 rpm records.

One of the NSA's core responsibilities is indeed to preserve sound, whether on the original carrier or through conservation and playback copies. It is an integral part of this work to retain material that puts the sound into a broader context; original discs and labels, inner and outer sleeves, catalogues, periodicals, artefacts, and so on. Our practices are in accord with procedures used throughout the library and museum worlds, including the Library of Congress, and in many respects we lead the way in developing and encouraging ever-better archival methods and attitudes.

The policy of the BIRS (wherein most of our 78rpm collection was accumulated) was always to throw away the album and re-sleeve the discs for separate storage. In the few cases when we receive albums nowadays they are seldom accompanied by their correct complement of records, and thus are normally disposed of. If we were now offered a complete

album of 78s which we decide to accept because we did not have any of the discs, thought would be given to retaining the album as an entity; because under our current shelving system it would be now possible to give it a single accession number. But in any case the records themselves are always stored in specially made sleeves of heavy archival paper.

Yours faithfully,

A. C. Jewitt, Acting Director, National Sound Archive, London

Replies to John Loader and Eric Smith

Dear Christopher,

In the August 1992 issue of *Hillandale News*, John Loader in his published letter asked about a record without a maker's name. The plain label had Record Number 1074 (with additionally 392 on one side) and matrix [sic] numbers A20336 and A20339, the two titles being *Les Cloches* (The Bell) and *Callito - Spanish March* with the artist credit being written as Orchestra Jumbo Military.

I can identify the disc as Jumbo Record No.1074. It was issued in October 1913. the A prefixed numbers are not the matrix numbers but are record numbers in the block of "military band recordings" series which began at A20001. The correct artist credit for 1074 is Jumbo Military Band. The first title is a composition of S. Lopé and the second title is by C. André. The matrix numbers should be Lxo 2317 for *Callito* and Lxo 2320 for *Les Cloches*. I hope John Loader will get in touch with me if I have the matrix numbers logged incorrectly.

In the October 1992 issue Eric Smith asks about the value of the Prince of Wales' recording on *Sportsmanship*, backed on the reverse by H. M. Coldstream Guards playing *God Bless the Prince of Wales*.

I cannot vouch for any value that may be put upon this disc but the Prince recorded it on June 1st 1924 and it was issued on "His Master's Voice" RD 887 (01179 Cc4815-2). A master was obviously sent to the Victor Talking Machine Company in America for pressing as a Victor Record. Whether the same take 2 was issued I cannot say.

The band's contribution was recorded on the 12th July 1924 and the male chorus which sang *God Bless the Prince of Wales* comprising eight voices. Interspersed between the two renderings of the songs are played the regimental marches of the

Household Brigade of Guards and comprising *The British Grenadiers* of the Grenadier Guards; *Hielan' Laddie* of the Scots Guards; *The Rising of the Lark* of the Welsh Guards; *St. Patrick's Day* of the Irish Guards and *Millanelle* of the Coldstream Guards. The conductor was Lieut. R. G. Evans. Full number data is HMV RD 887 (2-0394 Cc4885-2).

Yours sincerely,

Frank Andrews, Neasden, London

London Meetings

Dear Editor,

As a relatively new member of C.L.P.G.S. and reader of *Hillandale News*, may I congratulate you on an interesting and well informed magazine.

Earlier this year, I attended three of the London Meetings. Two of the meetings I found of great interest, the other while fascinating, was 'not quite my subject'. I was sad that the meetings were not as well attended as I might have expected.

Living over 100 miles from London, not possessing a car and having to make special arrangements to stay in London so as to attend the meeting (not to mention having to rise 'with the larks' to get back to work the next morning), I gave the next few meetings a miss, the titles of the programmes giving me no indication that the talks would be on subjects of interest to me.

Reading the October 1992 edition of *Hillandale News*, I was most disappointed to find out that both talks were on subjects that were of interest to me.

This brings me to the point of my letter. How was I to know that *Introducing the 30* would be about the introduction of 12" G&T's etc. and what will *Desert Island Discs plus four* be about? The mind boggles! Might I suggest that the London Branch of the Society provide *Hillandale News* with brief synopses of the meetings to publish alongside the list of forthcoming meeting dates?

I'm sure that this simple measure would help to bolster attendances.

Regards,

Juliet Adams, Kings Lynn, Norfolk
(A rare female gramophone and early 78 collector)

{How refreshing it is to have one of our lady members air her views! Juliet raises a valid point and I would be interested to learn what other members think about the issue of titles to programmes. Ed.}

Lilian Bryant

Dear Chris,

When I was pursuing research several years ago on Pathé Frères activities, the names of Lilian Bryant and George Baker appeared to be very often close together, and perhaps, at that time, something seemed to point to their being man and wife. It was several years ago so I forget exactly what occurred, but the fact is I have never discovered any corroborative evidence since. It's a pity that in this instance, possibly by a chance remark in conversation, that this rumour has again come to light.

It is a fact that Lilian worked for the Russell Hunting Record Company (Sterling cylinders) and she transferred to Pathé on the collapse of Sterling, and at the time George Baker was doing test recordings for Pathé.

I think we must say that, although we thought during early researches that they were man and wife, we have since come to realise that we were mistaken, and that it was unfortunate that the mistake was resurrected in the reporting of my programme.

Best regards,

Len Watts, Twickenham

Dictaphone cylinder players

Dear Editor,

I was keenly interested in the brief article by Rick Hardy in *Hillandale News* No.188, of the Dictaphone converted to play cylinder records electrically.

As an old Dictaphone machine would be inexpensive to acquire, and its conversion hardly an historical or cultural loss, the project would seem very attractive to anyone wishing to reproduce cylinders safely with modern pick-up cartridge.

Would Rick Hardy and Len Watts be willing to expand in detail on how the conversion was carried out, and what sort of machine is required? I fully understand, of course, that Len Watts may not wish to broadcast some aspects of his design - perhaps he might consider selling a detailed blueprint for such a conversion through 'Phonoparts' or elsewhere?

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Dowell, Southampton

John Kruesi and the Odeon cupola

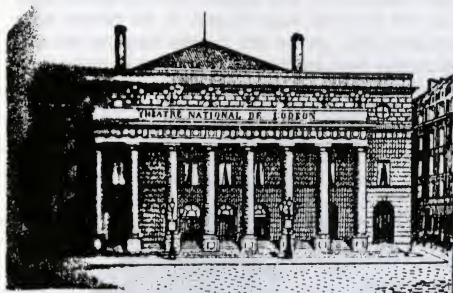
Dear Editor,

Re-reading past issues of *Hillandale News*, as I do from time to time, I came across two mistakes which should be corrected.

Firstly in issue No.177, December 1990 page 131: In the title **John Kreusi - The Man Who "made this"**, as well all through the article, the Edison technician is quoted as being Kreusi (Kreu-si) when it has been well known from Read & Welch's book and from others that the name of this man was Kruesi (Kru-e-si). These authors explain clearly that Edison made a mistake both on the name and the date when he wrote, in his old age, the sketch of the first tinfoil phonograph "Kreusi Make This - Edison Aug.12/77".

Proof of this can be seen in the photograph of Kruesi's tombstone on page 133 in the same *Hillandale News* where Kruesi is spelt correctly.

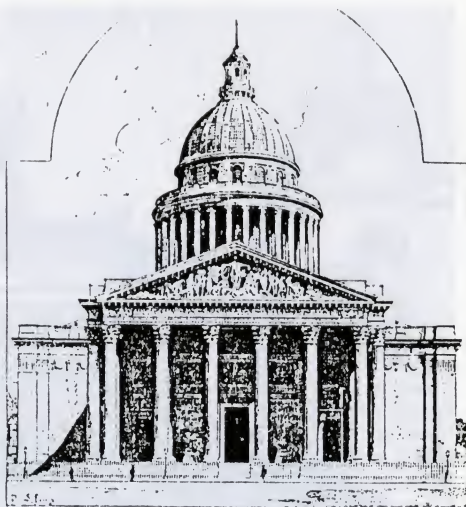
In issue No.180, June 1991 page 245: In a letter relating to the Odeon cupola, Mr Frank Andrews denies the drawing of the trade mark comes from the Paris Opera - and states it comes the Odeon Theatre in Paris.



Odeon Theatre, Paris c.1900



Odeon Theatre, Paris in the 1980s



Panthéon de Paris, or église Sainte-Geneviève

The two enclosed photocopies (I apologise for the quality of pictures), one taken at the beginning of this century and the other during the 1980s show the Odeon Theatre has had no change since 1900. Both show the roof as being rather flat with no cupola at the top.

The more likely cupola used for the trade mark is that of the Panthéon ("AUX GRANDS HOMMES, LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE"), a monument where many of the famous French persons are buried. In fact, I am quite sure one can find, in any great European city, one or several monuments having a cupola looking more or less like Odeon's trade mark, as registered in France on 8th and 16th December 1903 by the International Talking machine Company under nos. 12060, 12061 and 12070.

Yours sincerely,

Louis Perrin, Cagnes-sur-Mer, France

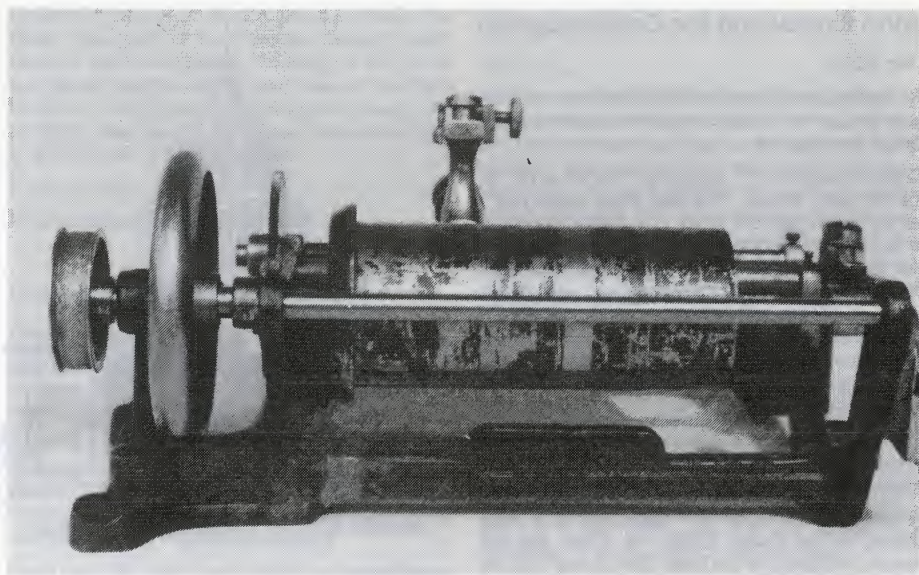
Unidentified phonograph works

Dear Chris,

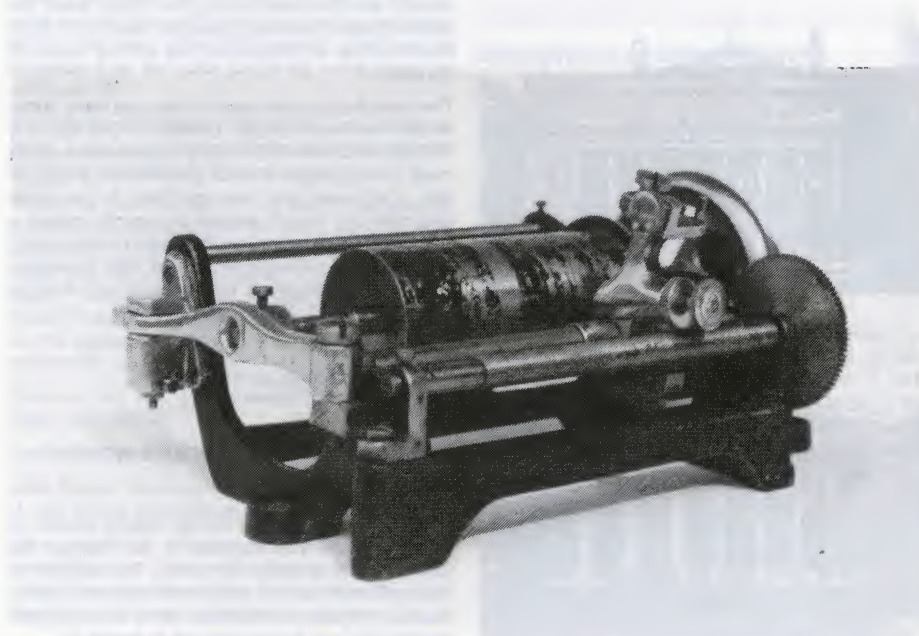
I enclose two copies of a strange looking topwork of a phonograph. The mandrel is not tapered but cylindrical with a length of 98mm. The diameter is 43mm. The number 28 is stamped on several parts. Have any readers of *Hillandale News* seen a similar machine and can anyone help me to identify it?

Yours sincerely,

Rolf Rekdal, Eresfjord, Norway



Phonograph topworks (1)



Phonograph topworks (2)

The return of Nipper

Dear Mr Hamilton,

I was interested to note my old friend Ernie Bayly's comments on the recent EMI/HMV CDs (CDHMY 1/2/3/4), in *Hillandale News* 188 page 123.

Whilst it was a very nice idea to revive this beautiful full colour HMV label on a CD, I would have thought that "mature" collectors would also want the contents of the record on the labels. If the cover and little booklet were to become separated, and this will happen, especially given today's public, nobody would have any idea what the records contained. LPs always contained this information, and whilst it must be admitted that cassettes do not really have the room, nobody could say that this problem exists with CDs: there is plenty of room, as with LPs. There is no excuse for such laxity. *Drawing Room Ballads*, *Sidney Torch* or even worse, on some other CDs, silly titles like *Music for Lovers* or *Marriage Line*, are in no way adequate for now or for posterity. One would have thought composers, publishers and artists would have been 'up in arms' so to speak. They certainly would if they gave two minutes thought to the matter.

On a slightly different note, regarding these particular CDs, *Drawing Room Ballads* and *Eric Coates* might pass muster for a 'special' issue such as this but, with the greatest respect, the Sidney Torch records, in the first place, were Parlophone and Columbia, and, can one really describe records like this, as good of their kind as may be; as 'historic'? Perhaps Toscanini, Beecham, Caruso and Kreisler reissues might have been more appropriate for such a prestigious presentation? Surely one must keep a sense of fitness, in a world of falling standards!

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Upton, West Wickham, Kent

Rick Hardy's unusual phonograph

Dear Mr Hamilton,

I read with interest in the October issue of *Hillandale News* Rick Hardy's article on his conversion of a Dictaphone to a phonograph and I am a little concerned that the Shure M44/C Cartridge supplied by us tended to (and I quote) 'exacerbate noise from worn examples' and wonder if in fact the cartridge was wired for vertical response only. Unless this is done the lateral channel will certainly increase the surface noise considerably.

Yours sincerely,

W. D. Hodgson, Expert Stylus Company

REPORTS



London Meeting September 17th 1992

In *Old Records, New Music* Part 2 Peter Adamson returned to the theme of his talk of May 21st 1992. We learnt that Wanda Landowska had said that the reason modern music had no melody was because it was modern: "Melodious music is the music of yesterday". Peter went on to show us that some modern music was melodious. He started by playing us *Rellets dans l'eau* from Debussy's *Images* recorded by Ignace Jan Paderewski in 1912.

War had influenced many modern composers. This was shown by Gustav Holst conducting *Mars* from his *Planets Suite*, recorded in 1923. We saw a cartoon of Holst in action conducting the *Planets* and also the Columbia Graphophone Company Ltd's advertisement for this recording from *The Gramophone* of May 1924. Another composer on whom war had an impact was Sir Edward Elgar as heard in his *Carillon* Op.75 of 1914, which was written in conjunction with a publication called *King Albert's Book* to raise money for a fund to aid the Belgians after the battle of Ypres. The recitation was performed by Henry Ainley and the orchestra conducted by Elgar himself.

Ballet played a more important part than opera when it came to modern composers writing for the stage. One of the few operas written in this period and recorded was *Hugh the Drover* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Vaughan Williams drew much of his material from folk tunes. This was discerned in the extract we heard from the opening scene of the opera with William Michael, Robert Gwynne, Keith Falkner and Janet Powell conducted by Malcolm Sargent.

In the first part of his survey of *Old Records, New Music* Peter had told us that modern composers were often influenced by politics in their works. We heard more examples of this with Pietro Mascagni conducting his own *Il canto del lavoro* (The song of work) composed in 1928 in honour of the Labour Charter to improve working conditions in Il Duce's Italy. Another example of politics in music was Alan Rawsthorne's *Left! Left!* (an arrangement of International marching songs of the people) from the late 1930s.

Many composers wrote music for special occasions and *Olympische Hymne*, written by Richard Strauss to the words of the poet Robert Lubahn to celebrate the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, was one of those works. We heard this performed by the Bruno Kittel Choir and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. Another work, written in honour of the young at the same Olympics, *Olympische Jugend*, conducted by the composer Werner Egk, followed. This was first performed on the opening day of the Games. The record was accompanied by stills from Leni Riefenstahl's famous film of the event, *Olympia*.

The Japanese authorities commissioned Western composers to write musical works to celebrate the 2600th anniversary of the Japanese Imperial Dynasty in 1940. Several composers including Richard Strauss and Jacques Ibert obliged. Benjamin Britten was also approached but his submission was turned down as being too religious (this work finally appeared as *Sinfonia da Requiem*). We heard Ibert's *Ouverture de fête* with the 2600 Anniversary Orchestra conducted by Yamada on Japanese Columbia. Nippon Columbia issued in albums containing all the music composed for this occasion and we were able, courtesy of Peter's slides, to see what one of these looked like. It was rather a beautiful work of art in pastel colours on soft paper.

Modern composers also wrote works for specific artists. On such composer was Béla Bartók who wrote *Contrasts* for Benny Goodman (clarinet) and Joseph Szigeti (violin). We heard the composer along with the dedicatees perform *Verbunkos* (Recruiting Dance) from this work.

Earlier on in the evening Peter had shown how folk tunes had influenced many modern composers. Percy Grainger was another composer in this category and we heard Anita Attwater (soprano) sing *The Power of Love* (an arrangement of the Danish folk song *Kærligheds styrke*) accompanied by an instrumental ensemble (including Percy's favourite instrument, the harmonium). Carlos Chavez had studied the indigenous instruments of the Aztec civilisation. This is made evident in his composition *Xochipilli-Macuilxochitl* where he tried to re-create the sound of a pre-conquest Aztec instrumental ensemble. We heard this work conducted by the composer. The American composer Henry Eichheim fell under the spell of Bali and we heard the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski perform Eichheim's *Bali* with shades of Balinese dances and gamelan orchestras.

Modern music was also written for incidental accompaniment to stage works. An example of this was Tikhon Khrennikov's *The Song of the Drunkard*

from his incidental music to Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Norman O'Neill wrote incidental for several plays including J. M. Barrie's *Mary Rose*. We heard Tom Jones' orchestra perform *Prelude and Call* from this. In 1948 Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* was revived and Harald Sæverud wrote new music for it. This section of Peter's programme finished with the Danish State Orchestra conducted by Erik Tuxen performing *Dovretroll* from this work.

Some composers were inspired to write music for films. One of these was Sir Arthur Bliss who wrote the music for Sir Alexander Korda's film of H. G. Wells' book *Things to Come*. Decca issued excerpts from the soundtrack of this film and we heard the *March* with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. This sinister music was made more haunting by the claustrophobic sound caused by the film's soundtrack. Peter showed a picture of a modern sculpture of the head of Bliss by Alma Mahler, followed by some striking stills from the film.

Sergei Prokofiev conducted his *Suite No.2 from Romeo & Juliet* on a recording made in Russia just before the Second World War. Pressings of this were issued in this country by Decca during the War on Decca Z1,3,4,5 and 6. As was well documented by Peter in his article in *Hillandale News* No.187, Decca did not issue Z2. He played us an excerpt from the original USSR 7764, which would have been on Decca Z2 had it been issued. We then heard a bit of the Philips CD transfer of what was claimed to be the same performance (I have never heard such an awful transfer!).

The evening finished with the *Final Scene* from *The Telephone*, written in 1947 by Gian-Carlo Menotti.

We are indebted to Peter for giving us an interesting, well-researched and highly enjoyable evening's entertainment.

Ariel

London Meeting 16th October 1992

It must have passed through everyone's mind at some time as to music they would like to have with them on a desert island, and for many this would be one of life's most difficult choices. Geoff Edwards in *Desert Island Discs Plus Four* played a dozen pieces of his preference, managing to do without the Three Bs or original Mozart but finding a couple of Romantics, Rachmaninov and Poldini (b.1869) instead. The other items on his programme were spirit lifters from talented and witty people like Flanders & Swann (*An Ill Wind*), Comedian Harmonists (*Schöne Isabella aus Kastilien*) and a parody version of the

Green Eye of the Little Yellow God with Stanley Holloway, Fred Emney and Jerry Desmonde, a piece to give encouragement when the elements have done their worst. Where has this sort of fun gone these days? In contrast Arthur Osmond's *Wallaperoo* seemed to be a Sam Mayo song warranted to attract a grey cloud. But included on the remaining dance, instrumental and vocal items were Paul Whiteman, Annette Hanshaw, Sidney Torch, Rollini and Venuti and The Organ, the Dance Band and Me, who would bring a silver lining to any cloud, and sent us home feeling better for an hour or so in the 'tropics' of South Kensington.

A London Correspondent

Midlands Group Meeting September 19th 1992

Chairman Eddie Dunn welcomed some new faces and many regulars. He reported that our exhibition at the two-day event at the Dudley Show at Himley Hall was highly successful and well patronised. It may well be our last contribution of this type at this site because the Hall is being converted for use as a permanent glass museum.

1993 is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of the Midland Group and we intend to stage a Phonofair, probably in a school in Wolverhampton. More details will be given as they become available.

The evening's entertainment was provided by Geoff Howl with a programme of 78s entitled "Their First Record". Confining himself to the lighter side of the musical scene, he confessed the difficulty of being in possession of first records of the most famous of the bands and artists of the present half century. He played and briefly described the early careers of Fred Astaire, The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, George Formby Junior, The Quintet of the Hot Club of France and Jessie Matthews.

Geoff Howl

C.L.P.G.S. PHONOFAIR



Saturday April 24th 1993, 10am to 4pm
at Fairfield's School, Trinity Avenue, Northampton

Stalls at £12 each can be booked by letter with cheques payable to C.L.P.G.S. Apply to **Ruth Lambert**, [redacted] Northampton. Tel: [redacted]
Please include S.A.E. for full details including map nearer the time.



REVIEWS

THE 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ INCH FONOTIPIAS: A NEW ASSESSMENT by George Taylor

Many years ago, Laurie Hevingham-Root (LHR) listed nearly all the 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Fonotipia records, and commented on a number of them (ref.1). Now Symposium have issued a CD of those belonging to Harold Wayne. This CD, **Symposium 1113**, is volume XIII of their issues of Dr Harold Wayne's monumental record collection. It contains sixteen recordings, only four short of the total issue of twenty. Two of the twenty are violin solos by Jan Kubelik; all the rest are vocal operatic. So only two vocals are missing on the CD. The title of the CD, *Fonotipia, the 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch records*, might suggest that all the eighteen vocals (let alone all twenty records) are given. The notes state that all that are in the Wayne collection are given; but I do feel that the title is a trifle misleading.

Most of these large records date from the early days of Fonotipia. Seventeen had been recorded by late 1905, the remaining three by 1910. Of the eighteen vocals, no less than ten are concerted (and another has soloist plus chorus). All but the latest three have piano accompaniment. The playing time is over five minutes.

Nearly all are in the 69000 catalogue series. 69000 and 69001 are the unissued record-

ings by Jean de Reske, and LHR states that 05, 09, and 20 were not used; indeed there are no titles opposite these numbers in Bennett (ref. 2), but do we know that they were not used? As Bennett says, "many if not all of the early blank spaces may well be filled up eventually with French recordings." The series ended with 69022. The eighteen vocals include one direct Odeon, 76200, recorded in Berlin in 1908, with an Odeon matrix number. 69012 was also issued as Odeon 86000; this was recorded in Paris, as was Odeon 86001, but this latter does not appear to have been issued in the 69000 series (presumably not as one of the 'unused' numbers?). Both the Paris recordings have Fonotipia matrix numbers.

I list again all the records, using LHR and the Symposium lists. LHR was able to listen to eleven, either as original records or on LP, including the two vocals missing from the CD. One of these, the Brindisi from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, sung by Edoardo Garbin (690011) does not seem a great loss, from LHR's comments; but the other, *Una voce* (in French) from Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, sung by Georgette Bréjean-Silver (69012) was reported to be very fine.

I have listened to the CD to compare my impressions with those of LHR. We usually agree, certainly in the generalisation that the records are a credit to Fonotipia. Some of our differences may be due to the different media we were listening to. The CD sound was splendid and indeed, this CD is one of the most rewarding of all the issues so far in the Wayne series.

The CD plays the records in order of matrix number (and presumably in order of recording). The first record is technically the worst though musically it is good, while the last is technically good and musically dismal - acoustic Wagner at its most turgid. Some of the transfers have a low pitched rumble; is this from the gearing of the recording

machine, brought out as the Symposium technicians strove to recover as much information as possible from the grooves?

Some of the concerted performances have a spontaneity and enthusiasm which reminds the listener of a live performance in the opera house, just as do some of the Mapleson cylinders. Perhaps the singers were inspiring one another? This effect was particularly apparent on 69014 and 69021.

Generally speaking, the balance between the singers themselves, and between singers and accompaniment, is good. Occasionally, the singers and accompaniment seem rather far away from the recording horn, and occasionally, the singers seem to partly remedy this defect shortly after the performance starts. There is a little blasting, most marked on the earliest disc (69004). The later ones are better; perhaps the recording experts were becoming more expert, or is it the condition of the records? LHR (and P. G. Hurst and Bennett) commented on the 'one dimensional' sound from some of these records, without defining just what they meant. To my ears, the sound is quite normal for good acoustic recordings, and indeed, most of the records can be listened to with considerable reward.

The technical quality of the eight solo vocals is good, though Maria Barrientos (on 69002) is rather distant; nothing wrong with the singing though. LHR does not like Alessandro Bonci's *Mignon* aria, which he feels is roughly sung and unsympathetic, though he suggests that the forward placing of the voice does not flatter the singer. Technically, the record is excellent, and I found the performance expressive and the singing good. LHR liked Bonci's very leisurely *Don Giovanni* aria. Again, it is an excellent record technically; the singing is fine, though too slow for my taste. The vocal sound is remarkably like that of Helge Roswaenge singing the same aria (rather more quickly) on E.M.I.'s *Fifty Years of Mozart Singing on Record*. The other two Bonci solos are also good, and he sings to good effect in the *Rigoletto* quartet, another of favourite of LHR.

I was a little disappointed with the Georgette Bréjean-Silver/Émile Scaremberg duet (86001). The recording is fine, but Bréjean-Silver seems to squeeze out some of her notes, and the effect can be somewhat tiring to the listener. I don't want to make too much of this; the only other record of hers that I have heard (on the supplement to Vol.1 of E.M.I.'s *Record of Singers*) is also a Fonotipia of 1905 (39225, an aria from Massenet's "Manon"). The singing is excellent, with only a trace of the squeezing; perhaps the effect was an artefact of recording. It is a pity that the Bréjean-Silver solo on 69012 (86000) is not on this CD.

LHR was somewhat disappointed with the *Aida* Act 2 finale record (69022), ranking it a splendid failure. He felt that the orchestra swamped the singers. I thought the record was splendid, particularly for its time. One could claim that the balance between singers and orchestra was similar to that in an opera house - we are so used to hearing singers 'up front' on records.

All in all, this CD is a fine monument to Harold Wayne's collection, to Symposium, and most of all, to Fonotipia.

References

- 1) L. Hevingham-Root, *Hillandale News* No.49 (1969) pp 169-76; 178-79. LHR also provides photographs of three of the labels on these records. No-one is perfect; Adelina Stehle's surname is misspelt on 69014.
- 2) J. R. Bennett, *Voices of the Past*, Vol.3: *Dischi Fonotipia*, Oakwood Press, 1953, with 1957 and 1964 additions.

Note on Matrix Numbers (see table)

All Fonotipia records of whatever diameter shared the same numerical matrix sequence. record sizes were indicated by 'x' prefixes: x = 10¾"; xx = 12"; xxx = 13¾". All the present records should be xxx, although this was occasionally (usually?) ignored. Only seven (out of 15) are so designated by LHR, only two (out of 16) by Symposium. Typographical errors or matrix numbering errors?

The 13¾ inch Fonotipias and Odeons

Cat.No.	Matrix LHR	Symposium	Title	Artists	Opinion LHR	GWT
69002	xxPh29	xxPh29	Ombre leggera, "Dinorah"	Barrientos		good
69003		xxPh30	Terzetto, "Ballo in Maschera"	Russ, Longobardi & Pacini		aver.
69004	xxPh16	xxPh16	Non m'inganno, "Trovatore"	" " "		good
69006	xxPh123	xxPh123	O aprile, "Sansone e Dalila"	Parsi-Pettinella		aver.
69007	xxPh158	xxPh158	Ah! non credevi, "Mignon"	Bonci	rough	exc.
69008	xxxPh179	xxPh179	Dalla sua pace, "Don Giovanni"	"	exc.	exc.
69010(1)			"Lucia" sextet	Kubelik (vln)		
69011	xxPh290		Brindisi, "Cavalleria Rusticana"	Garbin & chorus	poor	
69012(2)	xxPh657		Una voce, "Barber of Seville"	Bréjean-Silver	good	
69013	xxPh275		variations, "God save the King"	Kubelik (vln)		
69014	xxxPh265	xxPh265	quartet, "La Bohème"	Garbin, Sammarco, Stehle & Camporelli	aver.	good
69015	xxxPh294	Phxx294	Solenne in quest'ora "Forza del Destino"	Garbin & Sammarco	good	good
69016	xxxPh291	xxPh291	Nume custode, "Aïda"	Garbin, Luppi & chorus	aver.	good
69017	Phxxx306	Phxx306	Cielo e mar, "Gioconda"	Bonci	exc.	exc.
69018		xxPh301	Se tu m'ami (Pergolesi)	"		exc.
69019	xxxPh439	xxxPh439	quartet, "Rigoletto"	Bonci, Pinkert, Lucacewska & Magini-Coletti		exc.
69021	xxxPh3801	[?]	Già ti veggo, "Gioconda"	Mazzoleni, Armanini, Stracciari, de Angelis & chorus	exc.	good
69022	[?]	[?]	finale Act 2, "Aïda"	Pasini-Vitale, Parsi- -Pettinella, Calleja, Magini-Coletti, Luppi, Corradetti & Chorus	good failure	exc.
86001(3)	xxPh691	xxPh691	duet, "Faust"	Bréjean-Silver & Scaremberg		good
76200(3) (4)		xxxB3414	Erda's warning, "Reingold"	Feinhals		tech. good

Notes:

- (1) the arrangement for solo violin by Saint-Lubin. Kubelik also recorded this for G&T in 1902.
 (2) also Odeon 86000 (3) Odeon issue (4) record not in LHR list.

Michael Coleman 1891 to 1945 Irish Fiddler

It is claimed by many that the best of traditional Irish music was recorded during the 1920s and early 1930s - but in the United States of America Michael Coleman, the Sligo fiddle player was one of these recording artists and was Ireland's most influential musician of the 20th Century.

On a personal note I am always pleased to find one of Coleman's records. It does not happen often and most times they are almost played smooth. It was indeed a pleasure, when I arrived home, to find awaiting me 2 cassettes of Michael Coleman's music - two hours of it and a 100 page book on his life and times.

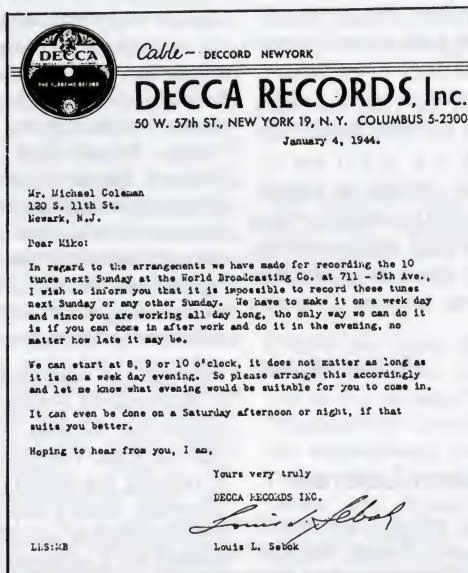
Michael Coleman was born in County Sligo in 1891, where he learned from locals, a distinctive style which made his fiddle playing instantly recognisable, embellished and ornamented but without losing its original character. Leaving off school in 1908, work prospects were bleak so the young Coleman worked at whatever was to be had and supplemented his income by playing at house dances or wherever music was in demand. 1914 sees Coleman in England but he found the work not to his liking and in the Autumn of that year he came back

again to County Sligo but not for long as he sailed from Queenstown in October, bound for the New World and never to return.

Shortly after his arrival in New York Coleman was appearing in Vaudeville, Irish dance halls and clubs and building a reputation for himself. By the beginning of the 1920s several small record companies had set up to cater for the growing demand for Irish music and Coleman's services were much sought after. His recordings were on Shannon, Vocalion, Okeh, New Republic and O'Byrne-De Witt. The 'big boys' also needed him and he appeared on Brunswick, Pathé, Columbia, Victor and Decca. A Beltona record issued in the UK under the name of Dennis Molloy was by Michael Coleman.

So, what does one get for their money? Well there are two cassette tapes containing 40 discs re-mastered in this re-issue. Some are electrically recorded while others are of the earlier acoustic system.

The latter may not be everyone's cup of tea but I can enjoy both - it's the period of time isn't it? There is a really beautiful book of 100 pages and containing over 30 photographs, maps etc. I was 'greatly taken' by one in particular, that of P J McDermott's shop in Bunnanadden with the steamship companies adverts outside its door offering passages to the USA - one way! As a



Letter from Decca Records Inc. to Michael Coleman

schoolboy I saw similar in my home town but didn't realise what they meant - emigration.

There is also a discography of Coleman's commercial recordings and the lot is delightfully boxed in a colourful video type case. A nice point too on the last page was that the box was printed at the Central Remedial Clinic Workshop.

The disc re-mastering and production is by Harry Bradshaw, who has produced a variety of folk music programmes for RTE and spares no effort in hunting down old records and coaxing the sound from them.

If you like fiddle music then this is for you. It's good value too, the book alone is worth the total cost.

Michael Coleman 1891 to 1945 by Harry Bradshaw is published by **Viva Voce**, Dublin. **Price £13.99**

FOOTNOTE At the A.R.S.C. Annual Conference held at Rochester, New York in April 1992 the award for the best research in the field of recorded folk or ethnic music went to Harry Bradshaw for his Michael Coleman publication.

Michael Hegarty

Unreleased Edison Laterals 1

THOMAS EDISON did not change over to the laterally-cut discs until it was 'too late' and his business was diminishing and then came the economic crash. Like any prudent record producer, he had already recorded ELECTRICALLY sufficient material in advance to produce an initial catalogue. Most of this was unused beyond the pressing stage. Diamond Cut Productions have delved into this. Bearing in mind that the material is aimed at recording history and Edison fans, some of whom have been involved even longer than the fifty years I have, I cannot understand why the producers have added an undesirable false echo. This is a backward step which Edison would

have abhorred. I thought (judging by European standards) that producers had discontinued this for reissues and were getting closer to the original studio sound by using something like 'CEDAR' to obtain clean results minus hiss and clicks; so much so that the results are very close to what the recording engineers hear performed in the studio.

Having aired that opinion lengthily I must concede that the producers deserve full praise for bringing this important stage of Edison's development to the light of day again, and I fully hope that the CD will sell out rapidly so that further volumes will appear (but minus echo!!!). That echo is not so pernicious (to my ears) on the band tunes, but it spoils the vocals. As I've said before, echo reminds me of a small group I heard rehearsing in the completely huge Royal Albert Hall. For instance, Bob Pierce's *Etiquette* accompanied by his own (?) piano should sound as intimate as would have done in a small club. Vaughn de Leath did not shout all across Central Park but specialised in radio work - aimed at the home living-room. The echo distorts the solo spots of trumpets in the bands.

Perhaps our readers accept echo. To ME it is deprecating Edison's high standard. Because this re-issue is in fact a step in the right direction I am GLAD I have it to delight in hearing the varied material. I must praise Diamond Cut Productions upon the extremely speedy way in which my order was fulfilled for I received the CD only 14 days after mailing my order in the UK.

This recording, lasting over 70 minutes, is available from **Diamond Cut Productions**, PO Box 305, Hibernia, NJ 07842-0305, U.S.A. in both CD and Cassette formats. The CD costs **US\$19.98** and the Cassette costs **\$13.98** both including postage.

Ernie Bayly

SIR HARRY LAUDER DISCOGRAPHY

by Darrell Baker and
Larry F. Kiner

It is a brave man who would tackle a discography of Harry Lauder, but here we have it compiled by Darrell Baker and Larry Kiner, in xxii + 198 pages.

The introduction is a biographical sketch giving a brief outline sufficient for an understanding of Lauder's recordings. The page size of 11 x 8¾ inches permits a large typeface that facilitates easy use. The recordings are listed chronologically by recording session dates from February 1902 to December 1942 and an index of titles affords access to those sessions. Other indexes list the recordings under makes of cylinders, discs, tape cassettes and LP records (the latter two being understandably only partial). There is a listing of songs written by Lauder, together with dates of publication. A chapter examines Harry Lauder on film, while the bibliography is very extensive. The index of songs is comprehensive. There are fine illustrations, including some of the original record labels, song-fronts, photographs, theatre programmes and picture-postcards (both photographs and 'comic'). I felt a sad note on seeing one of his son John with the Argyll Highlanders, for like many others, he was killed during the unnecessary World War I. (The late Edgar Lewis, a C.L.P.G.S. member, knew him, and talked to me about him.)

The Zonophone 'G.O.' series (originally standing for "Grand Opera") had various label designs and many recordings were transferred to it from green-labelled Zonophones. But many exist with red labels of the green label design with the green label catalogue numbers. I may have missed a

note elsewhere concerning this, but I feel it might have been added with advantage at the head of the Zonophone double-sided listing. Similarly, it could have been noted that many of the Pathés of 1904 were on cylinder and disc. The piano accompanist for the Pathés is given as "Unidentified, possibly Landon Ronald". That should have been left as "unidentified". Several competent record historians in Britain agree with me that it is most unlikely to have been Ronald. Perhaps the authors could reveal the source for this supposition. It is also thought in Britain to have been just too early for Lilian Bryant.

Other than the minor points above, this is an excellent discography which I thoroughly recommend to collectors of Music Hall books and records. It will enhance your bookshelf greatly.

In the U.S.A. it is published by Scarecrow Press at \$42.00. In Britain it is available from Shelving, 127 Sandgate Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2BL (letters only) at £31.90.

Ernie Bayly

{There are three errors in this publication which Ernie has omitted to mention. The first is the repeated reference to the British Broadcasting Company instead of the British Broadcasting Corporation. The second is the regular reference to "The Gramophone and Typewriter Company" and the third the frequent mention of "His Master's Voice Record Company Ltd." These should, of course, have read Gramophone and Typewriter Ltd. and Gramophone Company Ltd. respectively. I have pointed out these mistakes so that the authors can correct them before reprinting the book. They in no way alter the positive tenor of Ernie's review. Ed.}



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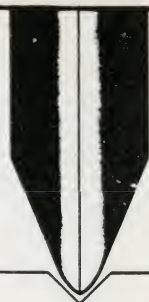
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